

Father of U-2 Pilot Is Seeking To Exchange Soviet Spy for Son

Oliver W. Powers, the father of the U-2 pilot being held by the Soviet Union, has written to Col. Rudolf Ivanovitch Abel, convicted Soviet spy, suggesting that he would seek United States permission to exchange the two imprisoned men.

A summary of the contents of Mr. Powers' letter and Abel's reply were released yesterday by James B. Donovan, Abel's court-appointed lawyer, at his office at 161 William Street. Abel is in the Federal Penitentiary at Atlanta, Ga.

Mr. Donovan said Abel had written to Mr. Powers advising him his request should be sent to Abel's family, now reported to be living in East Berlin. The lawyer said both letters were sent to him by Abel. His client also forwarded a request that Mr. Donovan arrange to meet in

Zurich, Switzerland, with a lawyer who represents his family.

Mr. Donovan said he had "communicated with the proper authorities in the United States Government and have stated that I have no objection to such a meeting if the Government authorities it."

He said yesterday afternoon that he had been informed by Washington that he would be notified of the Government's decision within the next few days. He said he had made plans to go to Europe and was leaving today aboard the liner Nieuw Amsterdam for a combined business and vacation trip with his wife, Mary, and their four children.

He identified the Abel family's lawyer as Wolfgang Vogel of East Berlin. He said that if he had Government permission

to meet Mr. Vogel later

Mr. Powers' son Francis Gary Powers, was forced down in Soviet territory on a flight to gather information, the father has been seeking to gain his son's release.

He had obtained a United States passport and a Soviet passport. Mr. Powers, a 55-year-old maker of Pound, Va., said he hoped to get to Europe "to put myself in place of my

two weeks ago Mr. Powers said he had been promised by Premier Khrushchev to see his son. The following day, June 3, he decided to postpone a scheduled visit to his imprisoned son. Later word came from Moscow that the Soviet Premier had turned down Mr. Powers' appeal for his son's release.

The letter sent by Mr. Powers to Abel was mailed on June 2. It was turned over to Abel in his cell on June 10.

"In his letter Powers offered to approach the State Department and President Eisenhower to exchange Abel for young Powers," Mr. Donovan said. He requested that Abel in turn communicate with Soviet Russia to the same end.

Mr. Donovan said that on June 12 Abel, who is serving a thirty-year prison sentence, advised Powers that he should address his request to his family in East Germany, still living

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Remarks:

DI Penn mentioned that he had not read about this.

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